

**Statement of Support for Comprehensive Conservation Plan E (CCP)
The Will Dilg Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America
Winona, Minnesota**

The Will Dilg Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America has a long and rich history of resource conservation in the Winona area and throughout the Midwest. Our chapter's efforts directly resulted in the formation of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge, Horicon Marsh, and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Those efforts originated from conservation-minded sportsmen and women interested in sustaining the valuable resources that form the foundation of their outdoor experiences. We believe the conservation of our air, soil, and water provides that foundation, and allows us to then enjoy sports like hunting, fishing, birding, boating, canoeing, and a host of other outdoor activities. This is our Chapter's statement of support for the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service and their Comprehensive Conservation Plan, Alternative E. In addition, we represent the 50,000 men and women of the Izaak Walton League of America in continuing to uphold our Mission Statement.

To conserve, maintain, protect and restore the soil, forest, water and other natural resources of the United States and other lands; to promote means and opportunities for the education of the public with respect to such resources and their enjoyment and wholesome utilization.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge is about to be finalized. The valuable resources that we hold so dearly are endangered. They are falling victim to sedimentation, island erosion, and aging of the navigation pools that blessed us with such a rich diversity of wildlife. We also understand that river use has changed and a new management plan is necessary. As conservationists, as hunters and fishermen, and as silent sportspersons we value what we have long taken for granted. We know that diminishing river resources cannot be properly sustained and continue to support a rapidly growing population with increasingly varied interests. So, in the spirit of conserving what we love and value, the Will Dilg Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America supports the implementation of the CCP Alternative E as an important and necessary effort to conserve Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge resources and to

continue to make those resources available to a growing and diverse population of river users.

We congratulate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its sincere, diligent effort at seeking public input and fairly attenuating the draft proposals to arrive at a management plan that serves wildlife, fish, habitat, and multiple use for both motorized and silent sportspersons. However, we cannot condone further erosion of the proposed management plan in order to appease a small, but vocal, group of motorized sportspersons. The Will Dilg Chapter fully understands the need for compromise during management plan development, and believes that Alternative E represents a generous set of compromises to the motorized sporting communities.

Respectfully submitted by the Will Dilg Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America. Officers Lori Ahl (President), Mike Kennedy (Vice President), Barry Drazkowski (Treasurer), and Cal Fremling and Dick Hegle (Conservation Representatives).